

Shop Floor Scheduling of Semiconductor Wafer Manufacturing

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Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial Engineering
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Abstract

Semiconductor wafer fabrication is perhaps the most complex manufacturing process found today, with a wide range of complex issues related to production planning and scheduling. Computer-integrated manufacturing (CIM) systems make it possible, in theory, to use global factory state information for factory control decisions. The possibility of making decisions on an expanded information set raises two of the research questions treated in this dissertation: How should global information be summarized and used for decisions and how much improvement can one expect as a result, compared with decisions based on local information?

This research investigates lot release control and dispatching policies for shop-level scheduling of a semiconductor fab. We introduce a closed-loop scheduling policy, called Starvation Avoidance, that makes use of global factory state information and that in simulation experiments compares favorably to traditional scheduling policies (that use local and global information) with respect to the tradeoff between

throughput and queueing time.

The virtual inventory of the bottleneck resource is defined to be the work content at the bottleneck of all jobs either at the bottleneck station or expected to arrive at the bottleneck within a given lead time. Starvation avoidance monitors the virtual inventory and controls work release to avoid idling bottleneck machines without overloading the bottleneck.

The plan for the dissertation is as follows. Chapter 1 introduces the problem. In Chapter 2 we discuss at a superficial level the processes involved in transforming a slice of raw silicon into a wafer of integrated circuits. In Chapter 3 we review the literature of job shop scheduling (in particular, job shop dispatching) and scheduling and simulation of semiconductor wafer manufacturing. In Chapter 4 we introduce a queueing model of the dynamics of a semiconductor wafer fab and present a C programming language implementation of the model. In Chapter 5 we introduce a class of new job release mechanisms called Starvation Avoidance (SA). In Chapter 6 we compare several dispatching rules and release strategies on hypothetical and real data. Concluding remarks are made in Chapter 7.

*For
Lucia*

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Table of Contents

Abstract	1
Dedication	i
Acknowledgement	ii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Chapter 2. Integrated Circuit Fabrication	8
2.1. Integrated Circuits	9
2.1.1. Deposition and Epitaxy	11
2.1.2. Oxidation	12
2.1.3. Introduction of Impurities	12
2.1.4. Photolithography	13
2.1.5. Metalization	15
2.2. Summary	16
Chapter 3. Literature Review	17
3.1. Problem Definition	17
3.2. Single Machine Scheduling	22
3.3. Multi-Machine Scheduling	24
3.4. Job Shop Simulation Research	28
3.5. Simple Dispatching Rules	30
3.6. Heuristics	34
3.7. Search-Based Dispatching Rules	37
3.8. Scheduling Integrated Circuit Manufacturing	39

3.9.	Summary	41
Chapter 4.	Network Queueing Model and Simulator	42
4.1.	The Wafer Fabrication Model	42
4.2.	Simple and Weighted Priority Dispatching	43
4.3.1.	FabSim - A Discrete Event Fab Simulator	46
4.3.2.	Pattern Search	54
4.3.2.1.	Normalized Priority Functions	58
4.4.	Extensions	59
4.5.	Summary	60
Chapter 5.	Job Release by Starvation Avoidance	61
5.1.	One Product One Bottleneck Station Case - SA(1,1)	66
5.2.	The SA Dispatching Rule	69
5.3.	Multi-Product One Bottleneck Station Case - SA(N,1)	72
5.4.	One Product Two Bottleneck Stations Case - SA(1,2)	74
5.5.	Multi-Product Two Bottleneck Stations Case - SA(N,2)	77
5.6.	Summary	80
Chapter 6.	Simulation Experiments	82
6.1.	Experimental Design	83
6.2.	A Small Wafer Fab Queueing Network with Hub Station - Small-Fab	84
6.2.1.	Interpretation of Simulation Experiment - Small-Fab	99
6.3.	A Single Bottleneck Fab Queueing Network Dayhoff-87	106
6.3.1.	Interpretation of Simulation Experiment - Dayhoff-87	112
6.4.	A Bipolar Process Fab Queueing Network - Bipolar	112

6.4.1. Interpretation of Simulation Experiment - Bipolar	118
6.5. A Production Fab Queueing Network - SSi-Implant	119
6.5.1. Interpretation of Simulation Experiment - SSi-Implant	129
6.6. Another Production Fab Queueing Network - SSi-Aligner	130
6.6.1. Interpretation of Simulation Experiment - SSi-Aligner	135
6.7. Summary	136
Chapter 7. Concluding Remarks	137
References	142